



City of Topeka

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From the City Manager's Desk

May 13th, 2019

Battle of the Badges

The Battle of the Badges Blood Drive is set for Thursday, May 30th from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Holliday Building. Last year the Topeka Police Department was declared the winner of the Battle of the Badges, where a total of 58 donations of blood was given. This year the Battle of the Badges is

Battle of the Badges 2019
Posted by **City of Topeka Government**
4,821 Views



heating up again and you can sign up to donate by making an appointment. To sign up, download the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) and use sponsor code Topeka.



Road Construction

The City of Topeka Public Works Department is kicking off construction season. Each week, the weekly report will have updates on the road construction projects in Topeka.

You can check out the City of Topeka's [pavement condition index](#) (PCI) and [street maintenance program](#) to see how the Public Works Department fixes our streets.

Construction highlights:

- Significant rain events continued this week impacting



construction progress on several projects.

- SW 21st at I-470 closure.
Despite the continued rain, the Contractor's performance has been excellent. Unanticipated 18" storm line was replaced, all pavement removed, subgrade excavated, all new rock subgrade placed and concrete forms were being installed (started installing forms on Wednesday). Initial 2 lanes of concrete pavement planned to be placed on Friday (5/10). All concrete lanes are currently scheduled to be done by late next week. Still on schedule to reopen the roadway by June 1st.
- Staff conducted public informational meetings on the SW 12th conceptual design, SW 29th and McClure construction project and the Elmhurst infill sidewalk program.



CELEBRATE BIKE MONTH
BIKE WITH YOUR
COUNTY COMMISSIONER

MAY 13
6PM

**MEET AT GAGE PARK IN THE
BARK PARK PARKING LOT**



BILL RIPHAHN
SNCO DISTRICT 1

BRING THE FAMILY!
ANYONE CAN JOIN!
BRING A HELMET!





Flood Fight Training

Water Pollution Control and Emergency Management hosted the annual flood fight training and flood gate and levee inspection. The training included classroom and field exercises.

CURRENT

- No limit on quantity of signs
- 300 sq ft maximum per sign

PROPOSED

- Max is 3.5 sq ft per lf of building frontage for all signs cumulatively
- Single sign max of 250 sq ft

CURRENT

- 40 sq ft maximum size per sign

PROPOSED

- Maximum 1.5 sq ft per lineal foot of building frontage
- Maximum 100 sq ft per single sign

CURRENT

- Maximum height of 55ft
- 300 sq ft maximum

PROPOSED

- Maximum height of 25ft
- Maximum of 100 sq ft

FAQ

Will sign code update include temporary signs?

Yes. This is a comprehensive update so temporary and permanent signs will be covered in order to have legally defensible sign code. Based upon the community visual appeal survey, portable signs are proposed to be phased out.

How does the Supreme Court decision effect sign regulations?

Sign codes cannot regulate based on content of the signs. The general rule of thumb is, if you have to read the sign to regulate it, it will probably not pass constitutional muster.

Will these new regulations impact existing signs or buildings?

The new standards will only apply to new signs or buildings. Existing signs that are physically altered or replaced would need to comply with new standards.

Sign Code Public Meeting

The Topeka Planning Commission will be holding a public hearing on a new comprehensive sign code for the City of Topeka on May 20th at 6:00 PM in the City Council Chambers. The new sign code would be the first comprehensive update of its kind in 50 years that addresses both permanent and temporary signs. The new code is shaped largely from an extensive public input process which aimed



to improve the visual appeal of the community while accommodating the needs of all sign users and best practices. Major recommendations include:

- Maximum sign size would generally be proportional to the size of the building/property instead of a one size fits all approach.
- Discrepancies in height/size limits between zoning districts would be softened to make sign standards more uniform across all zoning districts.
- Commercial zoning districts would see reduced size and height limits except along highway intersections and large shopping/commerce centers. Non-commercial areas would see more relaxed standards.
- Monument signs would replace pole signs as the only allowed type of freestanding sign (with some exceptions).



- All temporary signs would be accommodated except portable signs.
- Abandoned signs would be prohibited and subject to removal.

The public is welcome to attend and provide testimony on the recommendations which can be found in more detail in the Planning Commission packet at <https://www.topeka.org/planning> . More info on the sign code update process can be found at <https://www.topeka.org/planning/visual-code-update> . Questions and info can be addressed to Mike Hall in the Planning and Development Department at 368-3728 or mghall@topeka.org.

Recent Updates

- There have been 6 broken [water mains](#) in May with 165 breaks year to date. At this time last year there were 210 water main breaks.
- Significant rain events continued last week impacting construction progress on several projects.



- Utilities is monitoring the river stage and assisting with flooded street calls and watching other creeks and channels for any issues.

Ash Street Force Main and Pump Station Project



The City of Topeka Utilities Department started construction on the Ash Street Force Main project on April 15th and is scheduled to be completed in April of 2020. The original station was constructed in 1928 with an expansion occurring in 1972. The project consists of construction and installation of a new 48" diameter force main as well as upgrades to the Ash Street Pump Station's existing pumps, gates, instrumentation and controls. There have been two failures in the existing force main, therefore this is a mandated rehabilitation project as part of the Consent Agreement with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.



Citizens in the area of the Ash Street Pump Station were notified of the construction by mail this spring. An open house and informational presentation was held on January 24th. The site of construction will have several pieces of large equipment working in the area. The City of Topeka asks that citizens be cautious around the construction work zone. Please follow all temporary construction work zone traffic control which will include detours for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. For more information please contact City Wastewater Engineer Michelle Neiswender at 368-4251.

Our Wildlife Heroes: Rach...



AZA Hero's

We need animal conservation heroes more than ever as the world is losing wildlife thousands of times faster than the natural extinction rate. A new public service announcement unveiled today by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) features four



professionals who embody what it means to be a champion for wildlife and wild places including Topeka Zoo and Conservation Center's Rachael Rost. The winners of the AZA Find Our Wildlife Heroes contest, who star in the ad, share the unique paths they've pursued to help save endangered species. The full PSA and vignettes featuring each of the heroes may be viewed on [AZA's YouTube channel](#).

Last fall, AZA invited members of its 233-accredited facilities to submit personal stories of their passion for animal care and conservation. Over 100 entries were received, highlighting the diverse work of professionals at AZA-accredited facilities and the love they have for their jobs.

After deliberation from a panel of judges, as well as a public voting period, four members from AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums were chosen as Our Wildlife Heroes. These four heroes represent professionals at AZA facilities who play a hands-on role



in the care and conservation of animals. Rachel Rost was one of four winners. Rachael is an educator who directly connects with thousands of students per year, engaging them in citizen science and inspiring conservation in the classroom.

Coming Up

- City Council Meeting, May 14th at 6 p.m.
 - The Topeka Planning Commission will be holding a public hearing on a new comprehensive sign code for the City of Topeka on May 20th at 6:00 PM in the City Council Chambers.
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Brent Trout

This weekly report is presented to you from the office of City Manager Brent Trout.

[For other weekly reports, visit the City's website](#)

This report was produced through our open data portal. We have several other open data portals to help connect you with the work we do, including portals that let you:

- [Visualize Topeka's \\$270M budget](#)
- [See Topeka's expenses, one check at a time](#)
- [Navigate our major infrastructure projects](#)
- [Track departments' progress toward our goals](#)





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